

Case 2688

***Callionymus pusillus* Delaroche, 1809 (Osteichthyes, Perciformes):
proposed conservation of the specific name**

Ronald Fricke

*Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde, Division of Ichthyology, Schloss
Rosenstein, D-7000 Stuttgart 1, Fed. Rep. Germany*

Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the specific name of *Callionymus pusillus* Delaroche, 1809, a fish of the dragonet family CALLIONYMIDAE. The name is threatened by the unused senior subjective synonym *C. dracunculus* Linnaeus, 1758.

1. *Callionymus dracunculus* was proposed by Linnaeus in 1758 (pp. 249, 250). Linnaeus' description ('*C. dorsalis prioris radiis corpore brevioribus*') was not very exact and he referred only to the descriptions of the previous authors Artedi (1738) and Gronovius (1754). He probably did not examine any specimens as nothing new was indicated; this is borne out by the fact that no material labelled as this species exists in the collections of the Linnean Society, London, or the Uppsala Museum. Wheeler (1958, p. 238) identified a specimen, No. 1853.11.12.13, in the Gronovius collection in the British Museum (Natural History), as a syntype of *C. dracunculus*. However, this specimen is *C. lyra* (see para. 2 below), as are two other specimens (Nos. 1853.11.12.11 and 1853.11.12.12) listed by Wheeler. A manuscript by Gronovius [1766–1777] on the fish collected and studied by him (see Wheeler, 1958, pp. 197–199), which is kept in the British Museum (Natural History) and which was edited and published by Gray (1854), includes *C. dracunculus* (Gronovius, p. 51 (subsequent pagination); Gray, p. 41) but gives no indication of specimens in Gronovius' collection, nor is there an illustration of the species.

2. In the past there has been confusion about the status of *C. dracunculus*. The name was repeated by Linnaeus in 1766 (p. 434) and used by Nardo (1827, p. 10), but this was only by reference to Linnaeus (1758) and without studying specimens. A few workers (Riedl, 1963, p. 539 and Haas & Knorr, 1965, p. 296) regarded the name as a senior synonym of *Callionymus maculatus* Rafinesque-Schmaltz, 1810 (p. 25, pl. 5, fig. 1). However, other authors (Muus & Dahlström, 1964, p. 136; Wheeler, 1973, p. 516; Bauchot & Pras, 1980, p. 340; Nakabo, 1982, pp. 79, 85; Müller, 1983, pp. 253, 254 and Fricke (in Whitehead et al.), 1986, p. 1089), have listed *C. maculatus* as a distinct species. Günther (1861, pp. 140–141) considered that *C. dracunculus* was a synonym of *C. lyra* Linnaeus (1758, p. 249) and referred to the work of earlier authors. *C. lyra* is a name in current use and the type species of *Callionymus* by subsequent designation by Jordan & Evermann (1917, p. 12). Subsequently, most authors treated *C. dracunculus* as a synonym of that species, including Lozano Rey (1960, p. 235), Svetovidov (1964, p. 382) and Wheeler (1973, p. 516).

3. Recently, during the course of a revisionary study of Atlantic CALLIONYMIDAE, my attention focused on the identity of *C. dracunculus*, which I had previously

mentioned in an earlier work (Fricke, 1982, p. 53). My first step was to check the original sources of Linnaeus' designation: Artedi (1738, part 3, p. 49 and part 4, p. 77) called the species '*Cottus pinna secunda dorsi alba*', and Gronovius (1754, pp. 21–23) named it '*Uranoscopus ossiculo primo pinnae dorsalis primae unciali*'. Both authors referred to the previous description of Rondeletius (1554, pp. 304–305), who named the species '*Dracunculus*', and Gronovius also referred to the subsequent citations of this description by Gesner (1620, p. 80, '*Dracunculus Aranei species altera*'), Willughby (1686, p. 136, pl. H6, no. 3) and others. Gesner first mentioned the species, as '*Dracunculus Aranei species*', in 1558 (pp. 61–62). Willughby, Artedi and Linnaeus gave the localities Genoa and Rome for the species.

4. An examination of the original description by Rondeletius (1554, p. 304) reveals that a male *Callionymus pusillus* Delaroche, 1809 was described and illustrated. Characteristic features are the second dorsal fin with very few rays (five or six) and anal fin with a greater number of rays, the very high second dorsal fin with all the rays filamentous, the small head, the long caudal fin and the vertical stripes along the sides of the body. Willughby clearly shows the low first and high second dorsal fin (the first dorsal fin is visible in Rondeletius' original illustration but not in the later copy of Gesner); this condition is only present in males of *C. pusillus* and cannot be confused with other species (*C. lyra* or *C. maculatus*). *C. dracunculus* Linnaeus, 1758 must therefore be treated as synonymous with *C. pusillus* Delaroche, 1809 and not with *C. lyra* Linnaeus, 1758. Wheeler (1973, p. 517) has previously noted that when Risso (1810, p. 104), Canestrini (1871, p. 178) and Moreau (1881, p. 172) used the name *C. dracunculus* they were, in fact, referring to *C. pusillus* and were not following Linnaeus.

5. *Callionymus pusillus* Delaroche, 1809 (pp. 315, 330, 331, fig. 16) was described from Ibiza, one of the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean. I have examined the syntypes in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris, numbered MNHN A1525 (two specimens). The name has been very frequently used, by at least 30 authors, the most recent authors including Wheeler (1973, p. 517), Bauchot & Pras (1980, p. 338), Nakabo (1982, p. 79) and Fricke et al. (1984, p. 107), and the species is common and widely distributed in the Mediterranean and Black Seas. Adoption now of Linnaeus' name *C. dracunculus* would cause quite unnecessary confusion and loss of stability in the nomenclature.

6. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *dracunculus* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Callionymus dracunculus*, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *pusillus* Delaroche, 1809, as published in the binomen *Callionymus pusillus*;
- (3) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *dracunculus* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Callionymus dracunculus* and as suppressed in (1) above.

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